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Your Passport to Good Health

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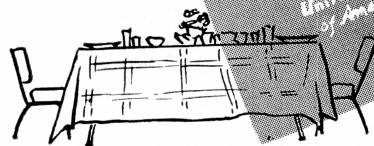
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the right foods



••• Your Passport to Good Health

You can give yourself the gift of good nutrition or withhold it. This article—another in the series on the nutrition of Iowa homemakers—tells how you can claim the gift of good nutrition for yourself and your family.

by Pearl Swanson and Elisabeth Willis

WHAT YOU eat every day is very much your own business. But it's important business. Why? Our daily meals and snacks provide—or fail to provide—the nutrients that help keep our bodies vigorous and healthy through all the stresses and strains of today's life. There's no question about this.

In the very simplest terms, we feel better if we eat the right kind of meals.

Few Really Suffer

We don't find that many Iowans eat the kind of diet that is likely to result in acute nutritional deficiency diseases. Very few suffer from such diseases as scurvy (which comes from a shortage of vitamin C) or pellagra (which results from a shortage of certain B-vitamins or the amino acid, tryptophane).

But we do find that many Iowans have diets that provide less than the desirable amounts of several essential nutrients. Such diets don't produce deficiency diseases. But neither do they produce buoyant health.

Many Need Help

So we find that many Iowans need help; some sort of pattern to follow—a passport, so to speak, to good nutrition. Fortunately, such a pattern is available. And it's not hard to follow.

The kind of meals that score high nutritionally needn't cost any more than ones that score low. They needn't take any more time and trouble to prepare and serve.

Once you get used to the pattern, you're likely to find that planning and preparing meals is more fun than it used to be. The pattern simply acts as a guide

while still allowing a wide variety. And if you follow the pattern for a while, you're likely to gain the extra pep and enthusiasm that will help you attack both work and play with zest and vigor.

How to Plan . . .

How can you plan this "right kind of meal"? An adequate diet should supply about 40 different nutrients daily, if we count all of the different vitamins and minerals that we know about. It would be quite a job to check each day's menus for all of these nutrients.

But there are short cuts you

DEAR IOWA HOMEMAKER:

The human body is unlike any other machine we know. It doesn't need a mechanic to take care of it; it takes care of itself. It keeps on trying to do this no matter what kind of food we give it. But far too often, it doesn't get the nutrients it must have if it's to keep fit. And over a long period of time, this undernutrition can't help but take its toll.

Many Iowa homemakers feel dragged out and old beyond their years—partly because they don't eat the foods that build vigorous health.

We believe we know one pathway that will lead to a new world of health for you and your family. We'd like you to explore the nutritional route we've mapped out for you. We hope you'll find this new world such a wonderful place that you'll want to become permanent settlers!

—IOWA STATE COLLEGE RESEARCH NUTRITIONISTS

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can use. Our studies show that nutrients "live together." If a food provides a lot of one nutrient, it's apt to carry one or more other nutrients with it.

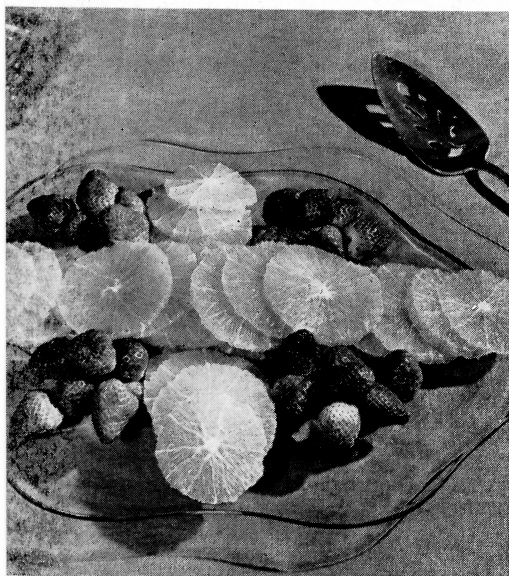
We've shown in earlier articles that if the *food energy value* of your diet is about 2,000 calories and if your diet supplies about 55 grams of protein, it's likely to carry enough iron, riboflavin, thiamine and niacin. But other nutrients such as vitamins A and C are found in foods that aren't particularly rich in energy value or protein. So you need to make a separate check of your diet to make sure that it's adequate in these vitamins. Then it's still possible for diets to be adequate in all these nutrients and still be short in calcium. Check on this, too.

Remember—*food energy* and

1,072 Iowa Homemakers Told Us So—

They told us what they ate—the meals and snacks they happened (or chose) to eat during the 24 hours before our interviewers called on them unexpectedly. These women, 30 years of age or older, were typical of the 650,000 women in this age group in the state. They were a statewide sample of all of you. And because we had a thorough look at their day's meals, we know a good deal about what the typical Iowa woman eats.

What she chooses to eat every day holds the answer to that all-important question, "Am I really well fed?" This article tells you how you can be sure that your answer is "yes."



A good daily diet should include vitamin C- and A-rich foods: citrus fruits, strawberries, tomatoes, cabbage family members for vitamin C; yellow fruits and vegetables, green leafy vegetables for A.

four nutrients, *protein, vitamin A, vitamin C and calcium*. If you can give your meals a plus mark for their content of all these, you can be pretty sure that you're getting as much as you need of the minerals and vitamins for which allowances have already been recommended. You'll probably also be getting enough of the less familiar nutrients like vitamin B₆ (pyridoxin), vitamin B₁₂ or folic acid.

Thus, planning an adequate diet comes down to knowing what foods supply these four crucial nutrients and seeing to it that each day's meals and snacks include adequate amounts of them, together with the necessary food energy. Let's see what these foods are:

Protein: Meat, fish, poultry; eggs, cheese, legumes, peanut butter; milk.

Vitamin A: Liver; butter, cream, whole milk, cheese; eggs; fortified margarine; yellow fruits and vegetables; deep-green leafy vegetables.

Vitamin C: Citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit, lemons); strawberries, raspberries; tomatoes; members of the cabbage family; white potatoes.

Calcium: Milk; cheese.

Food energy: Fats, desserts, sweets, bread and other cereal products supply a large proportion in most diets.

Many Iowa women need to pay more attention than they do to several of these foods. Many of the dietaries reported by the 1,072 women consisted almost entirely of meat, bread, butter and other fats, white potatoes and desserts. These foods make a good foundation for adequate meals—but *only* a foundation. If our diets are to be wholly adequate, we should include also:

1. Eggs, cheese, legumes or peanut butter.
2. Fruits and vegetables—especially those rich in vitamins A and C.
3. Milk.

What would our meals be if we used adequate amounts of these foods? We can get a pretty good idea by looking at the day's diets that met the recommendations of the National Research Council.

Of the 1,072 women, there were just 28 whose meals and snacks met these standards. Their wisdom lay in their use of the foods that so many of us neglect. Let's look at these foods and the parts they played.

Watch These . . .

Eggs, cheese, legumes, peanut butter: The 28 women made good use of protein-rich foods other than meat, poultry and fish. All but three of them included eggs, cheese, legumes or peanut butter in their meals and snacks. More than half of them reported two servings or more from this group.

You need to include a couple of servings of these foods as well as milk in your day's meals unless you eat two good servings of meat. Many of the 1,072 women failed to do this.

Fruits and vegetables: The dairy products, eggs and fortified margarine used in the 28 good diets were rich in vitamin A. And the white potatoes that appeared in all but three of these diets supplied some vitamin C. But the chief sources of these important vitamins were fruits and vegetables.

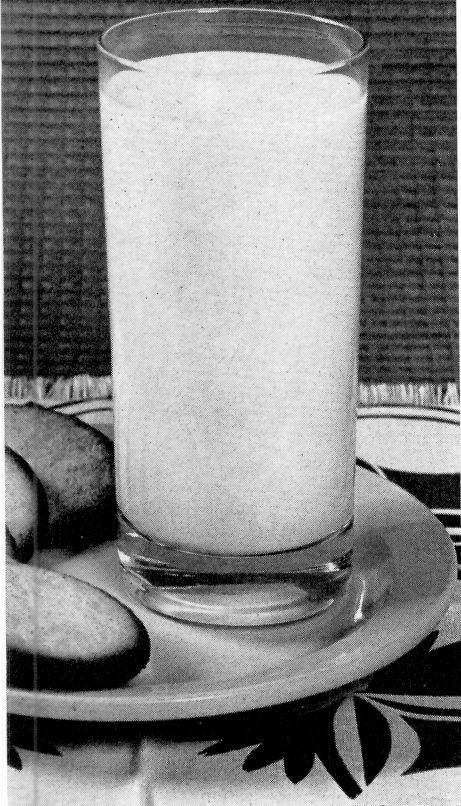
Fruits and vegetables were reported on an average of 5½ times in the 28 good dietaries—as compared with 3½ times in all of the 1,072 Iowa dietaries studied. That's quite a difference. But there's an even more striking difference if we single out the fruits and vegetables that are especially rich in vitamins A and C:

Yellow fruits and vegetables
Citrus fruits
Deep-green leafy vegetables
Tomatoes
Members of the cabbage family

These fruits and vegetables appeared in the 1,072 diets, on the average, only 1.9 times; in the "good" diets, 3.7 times.

The women who reported good diets didn't eat unfamiliar or exotic fruits and vegetables. They simply ate more than other women did of such general favorites as oranges and grapefruit and their juices; peaches, strawberries and raspberries among the fruits; and tomatoes, cabbage, green beans, carrots and peas among the vegetables.

Milk: All but one of the 28 used 1 cup of milk or more. Half of them used more than 2 cups. These 2 cups of milk provided almost three-fourths of the daily



Your daily diet should also include plenty of milk or cheese. Only these foods can supply your daily need for calcium. If you miss out on these foods, your body misses out on its needed calcium.

allowance of calcium, about two-thirds of the allowance of riboflavin and nearly one-third of the day's protein requirements. The one woman of the 28 who used no milk, as well as the three who used only 1 cup, included enough cheese to bring the total amount of calcium up to the desirable 0.8 gram.

In contrast, two-thirds of the total 1,072 women used less than 1 cup of milk—even when we counted the milk used in cream soups, ice cream, puddings, etc.

The Framework . . .

The meals reported by the 28 "wise women" are probably fairly typical of the meals we all would be eating if we were eating as we should. Let's see what the framework of such meals would be.

We've suggested in earlier articles how we can be sure of getting enough of each of the four key nutrients—considering each of them separately. By combining these suggestions, we can arrive at a basic plan that goes like this:

Include in each day's meals and snacks—

One good serving ($\frac{1}{4}$ lb.) of meat, poultry or fish

Two of the following (unless you eat an additional serving of meat, poultry or fish):

1 ounce of cheese

1 egg

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cooked dried beans or peas

2 tablespoonfuls of cottage cheese

$1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoonfuls of peanut butter

Two 8-ounce glasses of milk

Four or more servings of fruit and vegetables, being sure to include at least one serving from each of these groups:

I

Citrus fruits

Tomatoes

Members of the cabbage family

II

Deep green leafy vegetables

Yellow fruits and vegetables

One tablespoonful of butter or fortified margarine.

These recommended foods will supply about 1,000 to 1,200 calories, depending on the varieties of meats and vegetables chosen. And every calorie is carrying with it one or more important nutrients. This is the basis for getting an adequate diet within a "low-calorie framework." Choose these foods first, and then add bread and other cereal products—preferably whole grain or enriched—to meet your need for calories and increase your intake of iron and B-vitamins.

This framework is good—whether you're of normal weight and want to stay that way—or underweight and want to acquire curves—or overweight and want to be able to count your ribs.

If you weigh about what you think you should, you probably can safely add 600-800 calories to the basic list each day in the form of bread (150 calories), table or cooking fat (200 calories), ice cream or some other dessert (200-300 calories) or a bit of sweet (100 calories).

But if you're overweight, you'll not want to add much to the basic framework. You probably can use two slices of bread each day. But choose your fruits and vegetables from the ones in the groups above which are low in calories. Eat sparingly of starchy vegetables like potatoes, corn, peas and winter squash. Avoid fried foods, gravies and sauces. Use fruit for

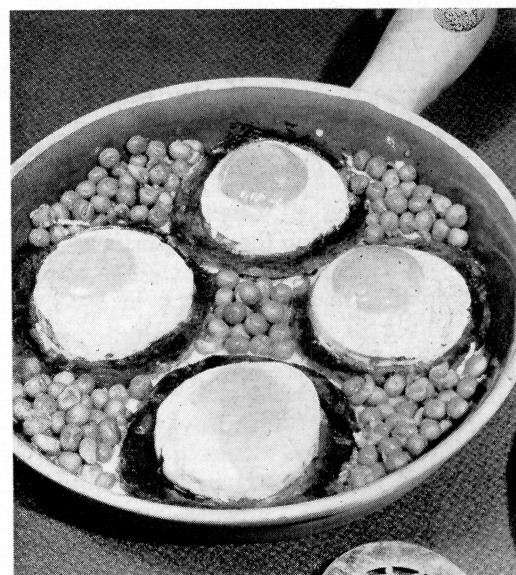
dessert and avoid pie, cake and cookies, and sweets like sugar, jelly and sirup. You may want to substitute skim milk or buttermilk for whole milk.

If you're underweight, add high-calorie foods to the ones in the basic pattern: the starchy vegetables, bread, crackers, muffins with plenty of butter; gravy, sauces and salad dressings; the sweets and desserts you enjoy. *Just be sure that these extras don't crowd out the foods in the basic framework.*

For More Variety . . .

You can improve on the typical Iowa pattern, even for adequate meals, and increase both nutritive value and interest if you'll be a little adventurous. Include some of the variety meats like liver and heart or tongue in your menus. These are even better sources of some nutrients than the more popular "muscle meats" are. And get acquainted with some of the less familiar green vegetables such as broccoli, kale, Swiss chard, and beet, dandelion, mustard and turnip greens.

Won't you try building your meals around this basic framework and give yourself and your family the gift of abundant health?



You may eat two servings of meat, fish or poultry a day. Many women don't. You can help meet your protein needs by using other high-protein foods such as eggs, cheese, legumes, peanut butter.